GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:692
ANSWERED ON:16.08.2007
VALUABLE BOOKS AND MANUSCRIPTS
Mahajan Smt. Sumitra

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether due to the ongoing terrorism in the Kashmir Valley for the last two decades rare and invaluable books and manuscripts, which are the part of our culture heritage have been destroyed as reported in 'Jansatta' dated May 18, 2007;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard;

(c) whether the Government is taking any concrete steps to preserve them; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM & CULTURE (SMT. AMBIKA SONI)

(a)&(b) No survey has been conducted by the Government to estimate the extent of loss of manuscripts in the Kashmir Valley due to terrorism.

(c)&(d) National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM), under Ministry of Culture, has collaborated with Directorate of State Archaeology, Archives and Museums to locate and document the manuscripts in the State of Jammu & Kashmir. The Mission has collected information on more than 22,000 manuscripts in 163 manuscript repositories in the State, which has been incorporated in the National Database of the Manuscripts of the Mission. In order to protect the knowledge contained in manuscripts for long term preservation, the Mission has started a programme for digitization of manuscripts under which more than 14 lakh folios of rare manuscripts from the State of Jammu & Kashmir have already been digitized. Public awareness programmes are also organized by the Mission to train owners of repositories on the methods of preserving their manuscript collections.